

## Maryland Judicial Ethics Committee

**Opinion Request Number:** 1985-06

**Date of Issue:** February 10, 1986

Published Opinion     Unpublished Opinion     Unpublished Letter of Advice

### Political Activity by Judge's Spouse

A judge has asked the Committee whether it is proper for a judge's spouse to work in the campaign of, endorse, solicit funds for, and otherwise campaign for a person seeking elective office in city, county, state, or federal government.

We recognize that Canon XXVII of the Canons of Judicial Ethics imposes substantial restrictions on political activity by a judge, particularly on a judge who is not an immediate candidate for election to judicial office. We recognize, too, that the activities of one spouse can affect the public's perception of the other spouse, as the painful experiences of some political candidates have illustrated. Nevertheless, the Canons of Judicial Ethics apply only to judges and do not control or govern the conduct and activities of a judge's spouse. See [Opinion Request No. 1976-03] (20 February 1976).

Accordingly, we perceive no ethical objection to the proposed activity of the judge's spouse. The Committee cautions that the spouse should insure that his or her participation in the campaign is understood by all to be spousal participation and not surrogate judicial participation.